

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, 4-7, 9, and 11-17 are pending. Claims 1, 4, 9 and 11 have been amended. Claims 3, 8, and 10 have been cancelled. Claim 17 has been added.

The specification stands objected to because the abstract was not presented on a separate sheet, apart from any other text. An abstract on a separate sheet is submitted herewith. Therefore, the objection the specification should be withdrawn.

Claims 1-6 and 8-15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,371,175 ("Van Dyk"). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 recites a "protective structure" comprising, *inter alia*, a "gasket wall (11) being in connection with means for supplying fluids under pressure, wherein said connection between said gasket wall and said means of supplying of fluids under pressure is made by a tube inserted at one end of said wall."

The limitations quoted above and added to independent claim 1 by this amendment include features from now-cancelled dependent claims 8 and 10 and are supported by at least page 7, lines 18-22 and page 8, lines 4-9 of the specification.

According to Van Dyk, the inflatable gasket walls have a plurality of passageways arranged in several positions along the length of the walls. (See FIGS. 2 and 4 and the description at col. 4, ll. 36-41 of the Van Dyk specification.) Claim 1, by contrast, requires a tube for supplying fluids under pressure "at one end of said wall" rather than at several positions along the length of the wall, as taught by Van Dyk.

The structure disclosed and claimed by Applicants offers several advantages over the Van Dyk design. Distributing a plurality of holes along the length of the gasket, as taught by Van Dyk, weakens the gasket wall, which makes it more likely to fail when inflated, particularly if high pressure is required. Perforating the gasket wall only at one end, as taught by Applicants, allows the gasket to retain its strength and prevents strain from being concentrated, perhaps to

the point of failure, at holes along the length of the gasket. In addition, manufacturing the claimed structure is simplified because the gasket is connected to the fluid source by a connection at one end, which is readily accessible from the top or bottom of the protective structure, rather than at many points along the length of the gasket, which might be obscured by the frame, doors, hinges, or other components.

In fact, Van Dyk teaches away from it by emphasizing that “a plurality of such tubes 28 [arranged along the length of the gasket] may serve to support gasket 20 upon door frame 14” (col. 4, ll. 39-41) and assumes “it is necessary to close off [the gasket’s] ends to permit inflation through one or several tubes.” (col. 5, ll. 1-2) A gasket which is “closed off” at its ends clearly does not a hole at one end to permit insertion of a tube, as claimed. Thus, the claimed configuration is not only novel over Van Dyk but also a non-obvious improvement thereon.

Claims 2-6 and 8-15 depend from claim 1 and are believed to be allowable over Van Dyk for at least the reasons stated above with respect to claim 1 and on their own merits. Therefore, the rejection of claims 2-6 and 8-15 should be withdrawn.

Claim 16 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Van Dyk. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 16 depends from claim 1 and is believed to be allowable over Van Dyk for at least the reasons stated above with respect to claim 1 and on its own merits. Therefore, the rejection of claim 16 should be withdrawn.

Claim 7 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Van Dyk in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,075,205 (“Zhang”). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 7 depends from claim 1 and is believed to be allowable over Van Dyk for at least the reasons stated above with respect to claim 1 and on its own merits. Zhang does not cure the failings of Van Dyk. Therefore, the rejection of claim 7 should be withdrawn.

New claim 17 depends from claim 1 and is believed to be allowable over Van Dyk for at least the reasons stated above with respect to claim 1 and on its own merits.

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In view of the above, Applicants believe the pending application is in condition for allowance and respectfully request that it be passed to issue.

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Respectfully submitted,

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